

**Notice of Allowability**

Application No.

10/608,589

Examiner

Brian Ensey

Applicant(s)

NIEDERDRANK, TORSTEN

Art Unit

2615

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to after final amendment filed 7/25/06.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-13.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some\* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.  
**THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

**Attachment(s)**

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_.

### **EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT**

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mark Bergner on August 1, 2006.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the claims:

In claim 5, line 12, "the microphone of the microphone module is fashioned as" has been deleted and -- the at least one microphone of the microphone module is a--has been inserted after "connectable; and" at the end of line 11.

In claim 6, line 2, "at least two" has been deleted.

In claim 7, line 12, "at least two" has been deleted.

In claim 7, line 13, "at least two" has been deleted.

Claims 1-13 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The present invention is directed to a modular hearing device. Independent claims 1, 3 and 9 identify the uniquely distinct feature of a supplemental microphone module with an external surface of the microphone module housing that has a curvature identical to an external surface of the hearing

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aid device module housing at outer edge boundaries of the microphone module housing when the microphone module is attached to the hearing aid device module in combination with all the additional disclosed limitations. Independent claim 5 identifies the uniquely distinct feature of a supplemental, detachable microphone module fashioned as a directional microphone wherein the microphone module housing supplements the hearing aid device module housing to form a housing of the hearing aid device having a uniform effect in combination with all the additional disclosed limitations. Independent claim 7 identifies the uniquely distinct feature of a supplemental, detachable microphone module including microphones forming a directional microphone system wherein the microphone module housing supplements the hearing aid device module housing to form a housing of the hearing aid device having a uniform effect in combination with all the additional disclosed limitations. Independent claim 13 identifies the uniquely distinct feature of a supplemental, detachable microphone module comprising substantially a same shape and volume as a gap within the hearing aid device module wherein the microphone module housing supplements the hearing aid device module housing to form a housing of the hearing aid device having a uniform effect in combination with all the additional disclosed limitations. The closest prior art, Uvacek (US 6154546) teaches a modular hearing device with a detachable probe microphone housed in a boot to snap into place over the end of the hearing aid and thereby producing a non-uniform housing; Klope (US 2003/0070868) teaches using attenuation damping material for microphone connections in a hearing aid. The prior art fails to anticipate or render the independent claims obvious.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue

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fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brian Ensey whose telephone number is 571-272-7496. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 6:30 AM - 3:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Sinh Tran can be reached on 571-272-7564. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

**Any response to this action should be mailed to:**

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Va. 22313-1450

**Or faxed to:**


(571) 273-8300, for formal communications intended for entry and for informal or draft communications, please label "PROPOSED" or "DRAFT".  
Hand-delivered responses should be brought to:

Customer Service Window  
Randolph Building  
401 Dulany Street  
Arlington, VA 22314

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

BKE  
July 31, 2006



**SINH TRAN**  
**SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER**